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THE COMMONWEALTH

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THE EDITOR'S LEISURE HOURS. Points and Paragraphs of Things Present, Past and Future.

It has been announced that over 4,000,000 spindles will curtail cotton yarn productions in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut during the remainder of July and August. Many Southern mills will reduce production as much as 50 per cent. during this time. Constant running of factories is one of the best ways to improve the times.

A hundred men from the various trades and industries of this country have started on a tour through South America to "spy out the land," and to see what opportunities to trade the land of our neighbors offers. This country is fast becoming a great manufacturing country and we need new fields in which to sell our goods. Every one will hope that these men who have gone on their good mission may bring good news for our people at home.

The failures in the manufacture of bicycles have been very numerous of late. They have averaged almost one a day. Chicago has sustained more loss by such failures, it is said, than any other place in the country. This is an evidence of how imprudently men sometimes rush headlong into what is not absolutely safe. With the great infatuation of "spinning a wheel" the manufacturers did not calculate wisely in their investments. Never swung a pendulum so far but that it swung back again.

Temperance people will rejoice to learn that all but half dozen of Kentucky distilleries have agreed to shut down for 18 months, beginning the first of this month. All the warehouses are filled with whiskey. In these days of see-saw opinions there is much said about over-production and under consumption. In the case of the whiskey distilleries shutting down in Kentucky, it is to be hoped that the cause is truly under-consumption and that this state of affairs will continue.

The reading public remember Secretary Carlisle's speech not long ago in Chicago on the financial question. The speech bristled with statistics by the column almost, but Mr. Carlisle spoke from memory, referring to his notes not more than three times during the delivery. It has been set down as one of the remarkable feats of memory in this age. The speech made eight or ten columns of print and must have contained from fifteen to twenty thousand words; and the remarkable part was the accuracy with which the statistics were given.

If any one thinks that this is a slow, dull age, let him ponder the following from the Westminster Gazette:

"A trial was recently made in Austria to decide in how short a space of time living trees could be converted into newspapers. At Elsenthal, on April 17, at 7:35 in the morning, three trees were sawn down; at 9:34 the wood having been stripped of bark, cut up, and converted into pulp, became paper, and passed from the factory to the press, from whence the first printed and folded copy was issued at ten o'clock. So that in 145 minutes the tree had become newspapers."

The introduction and use of the typewriter has been a means of much greater dispatch in many branches of business. And the machine was considered little less than a wonder when it was first introduced. Improvements have been made on it until its perfection had been well nigh reached, it was thought by some; but recent developments show that it is to be so improved that an operator on one of the machines will be able to double the speed of writing. Instead of writing the words one letter at a time, whole words will be written at a single stroke. Many of the smaller words in common use, such as "and," "the," "of," etc., will be written at a single stroke.

It is also within the range of possibilities and probabilities, too, that electricity will be used for touching the keys to print the letters or words desired. Wonder treads on the heel of wonder, truly.

AS SHE IS. WOMAN'S SPHERE TO-DAY. Some Things to Come.

Mecklenburg Girl in Charlotte Democrat.

Much is written, still more is said daily, of the "new woman." Prominent clergymen and statesmen have discussed the puzzling question of "woman's rights," and newspapers publish lengthy articles on the same subject weekly; yet the problem remains unsolved. That woman is forging to the front in the struggle for daily bread, and that some, yea a great number, are clamoring for their rights in competition with man, is an undeniable fact. That they are acquiring a broader and more liberal education and are entering callings, and following pursuits, that fifty years ago our grand mothers never dreamed of being efficiently filled save by man, is another fact. For many centuries marriage has been considered the highest and most honorable relation existing between man and woman; so it remains to-day, but in earlier days a girl's highest ambition was to attain that end. Thus it followed, her education was directed mainly to obtain the object of her life, and then, to live an "old maid" was to acknowledge that in the lottery of existence she had drawn a blank, in the battle of life had met with defeat and failure. To-day it is different, many are entering into the different walks of life and filling positions of trust and honor without laying aside their modest dignity and purity. Women, as angels of light, are being sent into far heathen lands by our churches and by their gentle influences win many souls for the Redeemer's cause. Woman may be found around every bed of pain and suffering, and with her kind words and soothing touch, watching and waiting through long days and nights with submissive patience, smoothing the pain-contracted brow and calming the fevered pulse until it seems as if God had licensed her to remove the sufferer's pain. Woman is not so anxious to vote and enter manly professions as she is to-day pictured. That suffrage will be granted her some day can not be doubted but we are not ready for it yet. It will come gradually as almost every other great political change has.

Woman is not quite ready to abandon her position as the queen of the home, the home upon which the basis of our republic, the safeguard of liberty, the highest ideals of social life are founded, and rush into the field of political aspirants and clamor for a seat in the presidential chair, or Senate hall. No devoted, consecrated christian mother is willing to leave the training of her children in other than her own faithful hands, nor does she want the time to hasten when one kitchen, one laundry, one nursery will serve a hundred homes as some seem to think she does. What is needed at the polls, is not more voters, but voters of higher intelligence and more sterling integrity. Voters whose minds are unprejudiced and liberally educated, who can distinguish between cause and effect; those who are willing and have the courage to probe social wrongs to the bottom and discover the underlying reasons for their existence; those who will stand undismayed facing opposition, following justice and truth wherever they may lead. The education and environments of woman in the past have not been such as to best fit her for these important trusts, but when the time does come for her to exercise the right of franchise both as a privilege and a duty she will be found cultivating reason, judgment, and courage, thus becoming a valued member of State.

The Two "Dark Days."

St. Louis Republic. There are two "dark days" mentioned in the annals of New England. The first occurred on Oct. 21, 1716, when it suddenly became so dark soon after noon that the people were forced to use artificial lights to do their ordinary work. This strange condition of the atmosphere lasted about 3 1/2 hours. Again, on May 19, 1780, there was a remarkable darkening of the atmosphere, but the phenomenon did not come on so suddenly as that upon the earlier date. The darkness in this latter instance began between 10 and 11 o'clock on the morning of the day named and lasted throughout the day. The darkness extended from the northeastern part of New England westward as far as Albany and south to Pennsylvania. The most intense and prolonged darkness, however, was confined to Massachusetts, more especially to the seaboard. It is said to have come from the southwest, but there is no mention of it made in the history of Ohio or the Virginia. The exact cause still remains one of the unexplained mysteries.

THE SLEEPING OF THE WIND.

The great red moon was swinging Alow in the purple east; The robins had ceased from singing; The noise of the day had ceased; The golden sunset islands Had faded into the sky. And warm from the sea of silence A wind of sleep came by.

It came so balmy and resting That the treetop breathed a kiss, And a drowsy wood-bird, nestling, Chirped a wee note of bliss; It stole over fragrant thickets As soft as an owl could fly, And whispered to tiny crickets The words of a lullaby.

Reform in Criminal Trials.

There is no other country on God's green earth, says the Washington Times, where as many murders are committed in proportion to the population, as in the United States. The figures are simply appalling. Within fifteen years the number has increased over 1,000 per cent. In 1880 and the years preceding that, about 1,000 murders were committed; in 1886 the number was 1,449, and gradually the horrible list has swelled until the record for 1896 stands at 10,212. England, with a population about half as large as ours, has only 380 murders on an average every year, and Italy has less than one fourth of our number.

The most natural question is: What is the cause? Go into the criminal courts and into the prisons. Murder has come to be popular, and the people have made it so. Not only are assassins treated with great consideration by prison authorities and sought out by foolish numbskulls to be loaded with flowers and dainties, but the law conives at making them feel that they occupy a distinguished position in the criminal ranks, and by these reasons are entitled to unusual consideration. The trial of the most brutal murderer, even though he may have been caught in the very act of slaying his victim, is surrounded with such regards as to put in the shade all other judicial proceedings, whether criminal or civil. Delay follows delay, and in the end but a small percentage of the murderers get the punishment they deserve.

Where is it all to end? What will be the record a half century hence if we progress at this fearful ratio? What is to become of our boast that we are the most civilized and most enlightened people in the world? The remedy lies in the hands of the courts and juries. It is they who must make the murderers understand that for their crime there is but one penalty, and that certain, and the extenuating circumstances will be but few and far between.

He Had The Coon.

Forest and Stream. Many of the sayings and doings of the southern negro that find their way into print may be apocryphal, but enough are known to be true to make good his claim to humor. A gentleman discussing coon hunting relates and incident that illustrates this characteristic drollery.

The party, consisting of hunters, dogs, axes and torches galore, had been hunting for a good part of the night without any luck whatever. Finally the dogs treed a coon. It would take some time to fell so large a tree, and one of the negroes volunteered to climb it and ascertain the whereabouts of the coon.

All agreed to this and sat around to await developments. Soon after the negro had disappeared among the branches a peculiar sound was heard from the top of the tree. It was a kind of mixture of negro and coon dialect. Some one ventured the remark: "Bill, have you got that coon?" "Yes, sah," was the reply. "I've got dis coon, but I wish you'd send some o' dem darkies up here to help turn him loose."

Condensed Testimony.

Chas. B. Hood, Broker and Manufacturer's Agent, Columbus, Ohio, certifies that Dr. King's New Discovery has no equal as Cough remedy. J. D. Brown, Prop. St. James Hotel, Ft. Wayne, Ind., testifies that he was cured of a Cough of two years standing caused by La Grippe, by Dr. King's New Discovery. B. F. Merrid, Baldwinville, Mass., says that he has used and recommended it and never knew it to fail and would rather have it than any other doctor, because it always cures. Mrs. Hemming, 222 E. 25th St., Chicago, always keeps it at hand and has no fear of Croup, because it instantly relieves. Free Trials Bottles at E. T. Whitehead & Co's Drug Store.

LAST CARGO. SIMON-PURE AFRICANS.

The Last Cargo of Slaves Brought From The Dark Continent to American Soil.

Evening Lamp. When the last vessel that brought human chattels to our shores shipped from Mobile harbor the war cloud, which a little later darkened the whole land with its pall-like shadow, had not appeared above the horizon. When this good ship, returning with something more than 150 uncivilized, tear-possessed Africans on board, dropped anchor in Mobile bay the conflict was in progress which made them valueless to the man who had bartered a ship load of lumber for them.

A short distance out of Mobile there is a swamp that includes an area of many acres. Out beyond this swamp there are fertile heights and piny woods, and it was here that the last slave ship discharged its cargo and the ebony-black, half-clad men, women and children of which it was composed were left, unhelped and without the power to make themselves understood to demonstrate their fitness to survive or to perish as the case might be.

They did not perish, for although they could not talk in a language that could be understood by any human being on this side of the sea except themselves, they could live on whatever it was the good pleasure of their employers to pay them and this was no important factor in their success, for being content with small remuneration their services were in constant demand. Thus they not only survived, but as time went on, in a small way, they waxed prosperous in the strange but not unkindly land where fate had cast them.

The little homes have an appearance of thrift and taste which is not found in the home of the American-born colored man in the South. Vines, flowering plants and shrubs are carefully cultivated, and everything both within and without is scrupulously clean. There is about both the men and the women, and even the children, an independence and dignity which at once inspire attention and a certain respect.

Although it is now between thirty and forty years since they were taken from their native land, without their consent, and inconspicuously set down where they now have their homes, they still keep up the tribal government of their native country, and are, as far as the community in which they live is concerned, a law unto themselves.

When the Dahomeys, who exchanged them with the American trader for a ship load of lumber, came down in darkness on their little village in the interior of Africa their king escaped, although many of the royal family were captured. These persons of high degree have always been deferred to, and they settle all disputes and differences. They maintain the best of order among their dusky subjects, who do not, however, pay them anything more substantial than respect, for prince and princesses work precisely as do their subjects, save somewhat more intelligently. It is said that not one of the Africans have ever been brought before civil authorities.

A nobleman of the tribe, and one whose word is law, is one Cudjo Louis, whose last name has been Anglicized from Consoulou to Louis. He and his wife, Abbianna, are among the few who were born in Africa, in this settlement, who can speak English, although they can all understand it. Abbianna, who is especially intelligent and thoughtful, in speaking of their life in Africa, said they were very happy in their own country and would much rather be there than here. When asked about their occupation and capture, she said they tilled the soil as they do here, and were captured by the dreadful Dahomeys, who make their living, not by work, but by stealing people when they are asleep at night. She declared that if she had money enough to take her whole family with her, she would be glad to return to her native land, even though the merciless, haunting Dahomeys are still abroad in it, because "it is so much nicer there than it is here."

These transplanted savages are very pious and without an exception are either Baptists or Methodists. When questioned as to what ideas of religion they entertained before they were brought to this country Cudjo Louis said they knew about the one great Spirit that made and controls all, but that they did not hear about His Son until they came here. Although Cudjo Louis is a leader of the tribe, the venerated prince and patriarch, from whose dictum there is no appeal, is his relative, Charlie

Louis. He is a little old man, with a serious black face shining out from beneath an aureole of silvery-white woolly hair, who cannot speak more than half a dozen words of English. He owns a few fruitful acres, which he has fertilized and cultivated so carefully that he has waxed opulent, and is by far the richest man in the community. He works from the early morning until the darkness closes in, excepting when he is praying. He is devotedly pious, and he retires to his little vine-covered house in the midst of his possessions to pray every hour or two. He raises a succession of vegetables, which are marketed by his two daughters, who carry them into Mobile in baskets on their heads. As he has the earliest and finest vegetables in all that part of the country, he gets the highest price for them. When we visited this black truck-garden prince his small holding was for the most part devoted to peas. There were six acres of them, and each pod-laden vine was carefully tied to a small stick driven down by it. Not only is old Charlie most thrifty and frugal, but also most generous. He has quite a sum of ready money at his command, and when any of his tribe need pecuniary help he invariably comes to their aid.

The women are no less industrious and frugal than the men. There are large saw-mills in the vicinity of the settlement, and the Princesses Zuma and Camba make a regular business of supplying the mill hands with a fresh-cooked dinner, and have grown well-to-do on the proceeds. These Africans pride themselves on being not light of color, but very black. It was with unmixed pride that Cudjo Louis' wife pointed to her shining black sons and daughters and said: "My childrens is all Africans." It is doubtful, notwithstanding her conversion to Christianity, if she would not be glad to have their swarthy faces tattooed as are the faces of all those who crossed the ocean in that last slave ship. So strong is racial pride among these people that they do not often intermarry with the colored people of this country. Immorality is not known among them. They do not multiply, but rather diminish as the years go on and some of the families have already died out altogether.

Did You Ever.

Fry Electric Bitters as a remedy for your troubles? If not get a bottle now and get relief. This medicine has been found to be peculiarly adapted to the relief and cure of all Female Complaints, exerting a wonderful direct influence in giving strength and tone to the organs. If you have Loss of Appetite, Constipation, Headache, Fainting Spells, or are Nervous, Sleepless, Excitable, Melancholy or troubled with Dizzy Spells, Electric Bitters is the medicine you need. Health and Strength are guaranteed by its use. Fifty cents and \$1.00 at E. T. Whitehead & Co's Drug Store.

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Now, we are willing to sell to you on the same conditions we buy it on. We will guarantee one single 50c bottle to cure any of the diseases above enumerated. Failing to do so we will cheerfully return your money. Yours truly, E. T. WHITEHEAD & CO., Scotland Neck, N. C.

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